I will gladly attend myself, having hoped before this to find such a course suggested by some more weighty individual than,

Sir, your obedient servant,

SCRUTATOR.

*** Our correspondent must not be led by the litigious and unwise proceedings of two or three of the district surveyors to condemn the whole body, which consists, for the most part, of able and right-judging men. We may feel it our duty shortly to animadvert on the conduct of these exceptions more pointedly. As to the proposed public meeting, we received some weeks ago from several of our correspondents a similar suggestion, but delayed publishing it on the ground that time would more clearly point out what portions of the Act required alteration.—ED.

ARCHITECTURAL MODELLING.

SIR,—I see in your last number a letter on the subject of architectural decorations, the tenor of which I should like to see carried into effect. At the same time, as a practical man, I would wish to point out a few of the evils of the present system, which architects might easily alter. In almost all cases the decorative modeller is not employed by the architect, but by the builder, who, having little taste for works of art himself, employs any body he can get to do it cheap, mostly some plasterer, who understands little about modelling, nothing about drawing or style of composition, while the artist of acknowledged talent is entirely deserted by the architect. The drawing made by the architect, seldom for more than a quarter part, gives a very ambiguous idea of the subject wanting, and in many cases no drawing at all, the models so made are consigned to the tender mercies of some hod-boy to cast, and fixed by others who know as little about it. Were the architects to employ the decorative artist without the interference of the builder, and allow a fair remuneration for his work, he would feel an interest in the finish of the works, and would soon effect great improvement. I am, Sir, &c.,

A DECORATIVE MODELLER AND A SUBSCRIBER.

CEMENTS.

SIR,—I think your correspondent, James Pulham, in No. 113, would do many of your readers who are users of cement a favour if he would explain the difference in the properties of Maude's Portland cement, Pulham's Portland-stone cement, and Austin's stone-colour cement; the three are described as bearing a close resemblance to Portland stone.

I am, Sir, &c.,

A READER.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Miscellanea.

THE PYRAMIDS ECLIPSED.—The *National Intelligencer* contains a long letter from Mr. Pickett, at Lima, commenting upon discoveries of very extraordinary ruins said to have been found by Judge Neito, in the province of Chachapoyos, while on an exploring expedition. In making a survey of the country he found at Ceulap, a building of most extraordinary character, which he describes as a wall of hewn stone 560 feet in width, 3,600 feet in length, and 150 feet high. The edifice being solid in the interior for the whole space contained within 6,366,000 feet of circumference, which it has, to the beforementioned height of 150 feet, is solid and levelled, and upon it there is another wall of 300,000 feet in circumference in this form, 600 feet in length and 50 in breadth, with the same elevation (150 feet) in the lower wall, and, like it, solid and levelled to the summit. In this elevation, and also that of the lower wall, are a great many habitations or rooms of the same hewn stone, 18 feet long and 15 wide, and in these rooms, as well as between the dividing walls of the great wall, are found neatly constructed ditches, a yard or two-thirds in length, and half a yard broad and deep, in which are found bones of the ancient dead, some naked, and some in cotton shrouds or blankets, of very firm texture, though coarse, and all worked with borders of different colours.

INGENIOUS WORKMANSHIP.—We have inspected with much gratification a working model of a beam steam-engine, manufactured by Mr. Benjamin Warner, a watch-spring maker, who has already exhibited at the Polytechnic Institution some extraordinary examples of patient ingenuity. It is composed of more than 200 pieces, and has the following dimensions:—The length of the stand is 3¼ inches, the length of the beam 2¼ inches, the height of the supporters of beam 1¼ in., the diameter of cylinder ⅛ths of an inch, the length of stroke ⅛ths. It has governors acting correctly, and fine silk forms the band. The parallel motion has straps and brasses, and is fixed with gibs and keys. Every part of the engine is bolted and screwed together, and finished in the same manner as the inside of a watch. We were sorry to find that the ingenious mechanist who had constructed this curiosity was about to seek his fortune in America. It is a pity to lose such a workman.

RADIATION OF HEAT.—M. Melloni, of Naples, has just completed some very interesting experiments on the radiation of heat. The previous researches of Rumford and Leslie proved that the surfaces of different bodies possess at very different degrees the faculty of giving out, by radiation, the heat of the substances which they envelope; and it has also been satisfactorily established that layers of the same varnish considerably modify the radiating powers of the surfaces over which they are laid; shewing, therefore, that the rays of heat given out by a substance proceed not only from its surface, but the points around it to a certain depth. It, therefore, remained to measure numerically the thickness of the superficial layer which assists the radiation, and to this undertaking M. Melloni applied himself. He covered the faces of Leslie's cube with equal layers of a proper varnish, augmenting successively the number of layers, and measuring each time with his thermometrical apparatus the radiating powers of the surface; he found that the power went on gradually increasing up to the seventeenth layer of varnish, when it became stationary. At this point, the total thickness of the varnish, as ascertained with the greatest possible minuteness, was about the four hundredth part of a millimetre. In comparing this result with that which attended the use of leaf-gold, M. Melloni found that a much thinner coating of gold would produce the same amount of radiation; but this difference is not to be imputed to the greater or lesser transparency of the coating, for lamp-black, which is very opaque, possesses like varnish the property of giving out heat from the layers on which it is placed.

FATAL ACCIDENT THROUGH THE FALL OF A QUANTITY OF IRON RODS.—On Saturday the 5th inst., just at the hour when the men engaged in the works of Messrs. Ditchburn and Mare, at Blackwall, were assembled to be paid, a loss of life ensued from the giving way of a stack of iron rods, which had been placed in a slanting direction against a beam, the bottoms of the rods resting upon the ground in the same way as they are placed in other iron yards in London near the Thames. Eight bodies, two lifeless, and six more or less mangled, were found under the ponderous weight, said to be about eleven tons. At the inquest, which was held on the Monday following, the cause of the accident was explained by Mr. Ditchburn's foreman, who stated his belief that the stack was thrown down by the men pressing against it. They were very numerous, and were lounging about waiting for their pay. He could not account for it in any other way, because the iron actually fell in the opposite direction to that in which it was placed. They were within an inch and a half of an upright position, and he had himself seen them properly strutted and supported. It would, by pressure, have fallen forwards, but it fell sideways. Mr. Ditchburn stated that the rods were so placed against his orders, and he was unconscious of its position until he heard of the accident, which he could not believe to be true, as he had given express orders that the iron should be moved away from its original position and placed horizontally on the ground. He had no doubt that it was thrown down by the pressure of the men against it. A verdict of "accidental death" was instantly returned.

DEMOLITION OF THE FLEET PRISON.—The Corporation of the city of London having purchased this property for 25,000*l.* from the Government, are now engaged in disposing of its materials by auction. The first day's sale took place, on the premises, last week; the second portion is to be disposed of by the auctioneers, Messrs. Pullen and Son, on the 21st instant, and following day. The earliest mention of the Fleet Prison occurs in the reign of Richard I., but up to the 16th century nothing is known of its history. The prison was burnt by the followers of Wat Tyler, and in the 16th and 17th centuries the records of the Fleet became suddenly filled with matters of the deepest interest in connection with the religious martyrs of the reigns of Elizabeth and Mary, and the political prisoners of the Star Chamber in the reign of Charles I. It appears that the prison was used for the confinement of debtors from the 13th century, and a petition from a debtor named John Fraunceys, in 1290, is stated in Mr. Knight's "London" still to be preserved. Great atrocities were committed on the inmates, and until the year 1727 little was done in the way of redress. In that year, however, a Parliamentary committee brought many things to light, and since then improvements have been effected in the management of prisons. The great Howard and the other "sons of mercy" have not laboured in vain, though they were not permitted to see the fruit of their exertions. The building now standing was erected after the burning of the older one in the Gordon riots of 1780, when the mob was polite enough to send notice to the prisoners of the period of their coming, and on being informed that it would be inconvenient, on account of the lateness of the hour, to postpone their visit to the following day. The former building also dated its erection from the period of a fire, its predecessor having been destroyed in the great conflagration of 1666. The entire prison at the present time occupies an acre of ground. Nearly 1,000 prisoners, besides the numerous officers of the establishment, have at various times been accommodated in these extensive premises. The buildings are computed to contain upwards of 3,000,000 of stock bricks, 50 tons of lead in the various forms of gutters, flats, cisterns, and pipes, 200 squares of slated roofs, 40,000 feet of York paving, 250 pair of glazed sashes, an infinity of doors, partitions, and interior fixtures and fittings-up, the pewing of the chapel, strong boarded and timber floors, iron girders, massive iron gates with locks and bolts of singular construction and well-tested excellence. At present it is not decided what improvements will take place on the site—whether a new street will be formed, or accommodation afforded for the administration of public justice.

FURNITURE WOODS.—A few nights since, in the House of Commons, Mr. C. Buller said that Sir Robert Peel had stated that furniture woods would be exempted from duty. He had thought they would have been included in one category; but he found the Government had enumerated the woods they meant to exempt. Now, there were various new kinds of these woods continually coming in from the colonies, with respect to which he wished to know whether, if left unenumerated, they would come in under the general designation? Many such woods, the produce of Ceylon and New Zealand, were not found in the list at all. Mr. Labouchere said that, consistently with their professed views, the Government ought to encourage the importation of these new furniture woods. There were many species of woods in the colonies which had hitherto been kept out by the duty. They all ought to be admitted on the same terms as mahogany. Sir G. Clerk said that as soon as the names of these new furniture woods were known, they might be admitted free of duty. Mr. C. Buller observed that the Government list was an ungracious one. There were a great number of furniture woods from Italy, among others olive wood, fig, and orange wood, which were not in the list. Mr. Mitchell then inquired whether the Government meant to take off the duty on wainscot logs; if not, he should submit a proposition for that purpose. Sir Robert Peel, in answer, said the Government was under the necessity of making some discrimination. If they said that wainscot woods in general were to come in, it would be contended that wainscot logs from the Baltic should come in free of duty.

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